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061643Z Nov 03

UNCLAS AMMAN 007297

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SAMIR AL-RIFAI APPOINTED ROYAL COURT MINISTER

1. (U) King Abdallah appointed Royal Court Secretary General Samir Zeid al-Rifai to succeed Faisal al-Fayez as Minister of the Royal Court on November 4. Rifai is son of Zeid al-Rifai, speaker of the Upper House of Parliament and former Prime Minister. Rifai, 37, has worked in the Royal Court since 1988. Most recently, Rifai was in charge of the administrative and financial section of the Palace, where he supervised the Palace budget, support, and hiring.

2. (U) As Minister, Rifai will handle political issues, communications between the King and the ministries, and supervise some administrative affairs of the Royal Court.

3. (U) Rifai holds a BA in political science and Middle Eastern studies from Harvard University and an MA in international relations from Cambridge University. He is married with three children. The Rifai family moved from British-mandated Palestine to Amman in the early 1920s, and for three generations its members have served in governments at high levels and in close proximity to Jordan's kings.
GNEHM